

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

news release

For Release January 31, 1977

McGarvey 202/343-5634

IDEAS SOUGHT ON HUMANE SHIPMENT OF WILDLIFE AND PLANTS

The proper and humane means of shipment for live plants and wildlife is an issue the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wishes to solicit ideas about from the public.

An informal hearing is scheduled on February 16, 1977, at 9:30 a.m. at 1717 H Street, N.W., Room 430, Washington, D.C., and the public is invited to attend or submit comments through February 23, 1977.

Ideas presented at this meeting will aid the Service in adopting guidelines to meet the requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. That Convention requires the Service to be satisfied that any living specimen for which an export permit is to be issued will be so prepared and shipped as to minimize the risk of injury, damage to health, or cruel treatment.

The Convention came into effect July 1, 1975, when the first 10 nations ratified it. Since that time, 24 more nations have become parties to the Convention. The parties, at a conference held in Berne, Switzerland, in November 1976, appointed a special committee to develop uniform international guidelines for the shipment of animal and plant specimens under the Convention. The proposed guidelines will be presented at future conferences of the parties.

Because of probable delays in implementing international guidelines, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service believes it is desirable for the United States to establish its own set of guidelines and standards at this time. In order to obtain the widest possible range of opinions and the greatest amount of data, the comment of all public sectors is invited. The Service is particularly interested in obtaining biological and veterinary data on proper standards for shipment of various plant and animal specimens.

The hearing will be informal and may include discussion between the Chairman and various speakers. Summary records will be kept and written statements are invited. Written comments may be submitted to the Director (FWS/WPO), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.